

DUNE

PART TWO

An Introductory Guide
..followed by a spoiler discussion.

WARNING:
Contains Dune Part 1 Spoilers



WHERE WE START

Arrakis has been reclaimed by the Harkonnens with the secret help of the Emperor and his elite fighting force, the Sardaukar.

Few survivors of House Atreides are left. Namely, Paul and Lady Jessica, who have fled into the desert and joined with the Fremen. Some of the Fremen believe Paul may be the Lisan al Gaib, their foretold Messiah.



WHERE WE START

Now, let's set the stage by going over the major players in the most spoiler-free manner possible!



House Corrino



The Emperor (Shaddam IV)
–Believes his plan to get rid of the Atreides has worked.
–Now keeps a watchful eye on Arrakis and the Harkonnens to ensure spice production returns to normal.



House Corrino



Princess Irulan

–Emperor’s daughter and student of the Bene Gesserit, learning directly from the Reverend Mother Mohiam.
–Expected to be Empress, or possibly married to someone from another Great House to rule jointly and keep House Corrino in power over the Imperium.



House Corrino

Princess Irulan

- Acts as a historian, making a record of events as they happen.
- Is, at this point, unaware of her father's plot against the Atreides.



House Harkonnen

Baron Vladimir Harkonnen

–Having taken Arrakis back, the Baron has moved his sights to securing future Harkonnen power.

–This includes domination of Arrakis and its valuable spice export, and selecting a worthy successor.



House Harkonnen



“Beast” Rabban

–Nephew to the Baron, he has been put back in charge of spice harvesting on Arrakis. But he’s struggles to eliminate the Fremen (who continue to disrupt spice harvesting) as instructed.

–Plus, he’s never really been the Baron’s favorite...



House Harkonnen



Feyd-Rautha

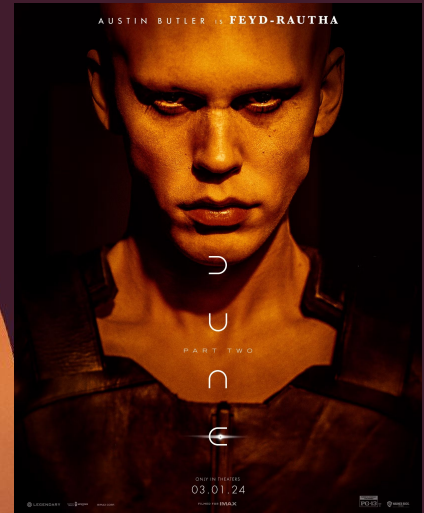
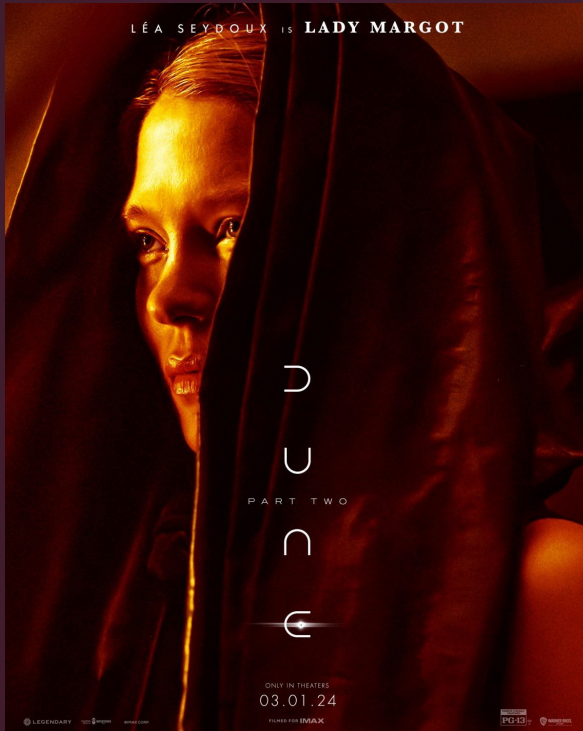
–Rabban’s brother and the Baron’s preferred nephew.

–Feyd has been declared as the Baron’s heir, or “na-Baron”. On Feyd’s birthday, the Baron hosts an honorary celebration in which Feyd gets to demonstrate his ferocity in gladiator style games. Attending that celebration is...



House Harkonnen

Lady Margot Fenring
–A Bene Gesserit sister.
–Why are the Bene Gesserit monitoring Feyd-Rautha?



Bene Gesserit Plans

- In Part 1, the Reverend Mother chastises Jessica for attempting to bring about the Kwisatz Haderach by having Paul.
- The Reverend Mother does not deny that Paul could be the KH, but also acknowledges the imminent threat facing the Atreides and that Paul may not survive.





Bene Gesserit Plans

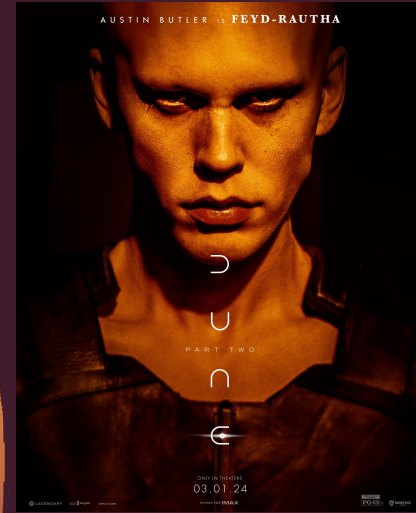
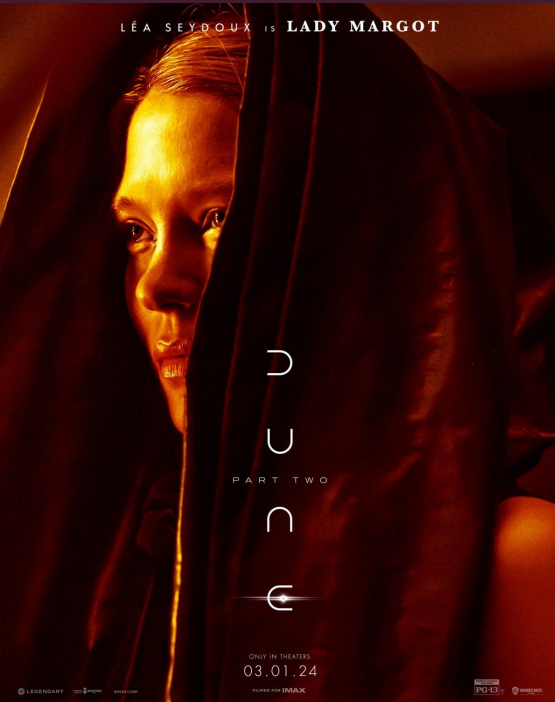
–She then tells Jessica, “Our plans are measured in centuries. We have other prospects, if he [Paul] fails his promise.”

–Remember: the Bene Gesserit have been working in the shadows to cross bloodlines and bring about the Kwisatz Haderach - person powerful enough to bridge space and time, but they want it to be someone that they can *control*. So...



Bene Gesserit plans

- Feyd-Rautha is another Kwisatz Haderach prospect.
- Knowing that Feyd will likely ascend to the leadership of House Harkonnen and rule over Arrakis, the Bene Gesserit send Lady Margot to survey Feyd. Amongst other things...



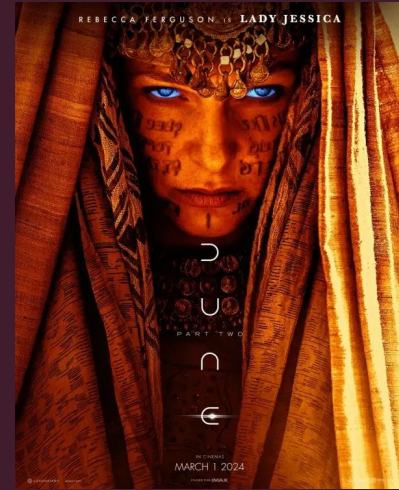
House Atreides



Paul

–Not dead! But everyone thinks he is, along with the rest of House Atreides.

–After the battle of Arrakeen, Paul and his mother, Jessica, escaped into the desert where they joined the Fremen, some of whom believe Paul may be the Lisan Al Gaib, or Messiah.



House Atreides



Paul

- Paul’s training has given him the ability to have visions that sometimes predict the future. But they’re vague, and not always correct.
- Once on Arrakis, exposure to the Spice - a psychedelic performance enhancing substance - enhances these visions.



House Atreides

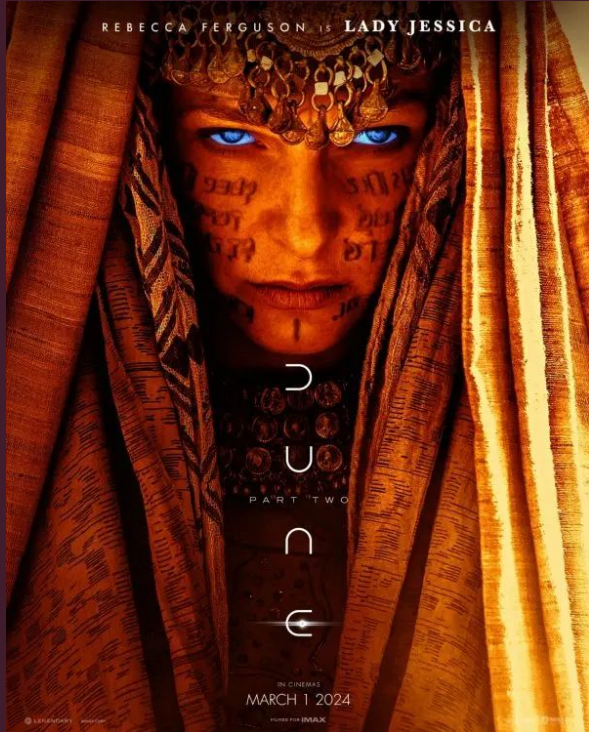


Paul

- For example, one thing Paul is able to see very clearly after his first heavy spice exposure is that his mother is pregnant.
- These increasing powers are some of the aspects that allow Paul to step into the role of the Lisan al Gaib and appear as a Messiah to the Fremen.

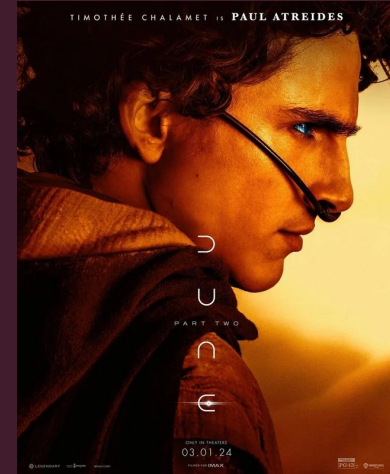


House Atreides

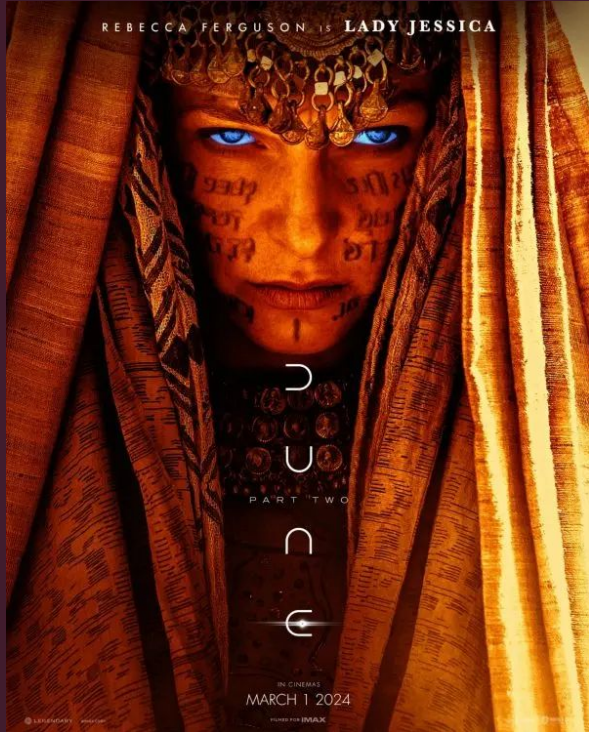


Lady Jessica

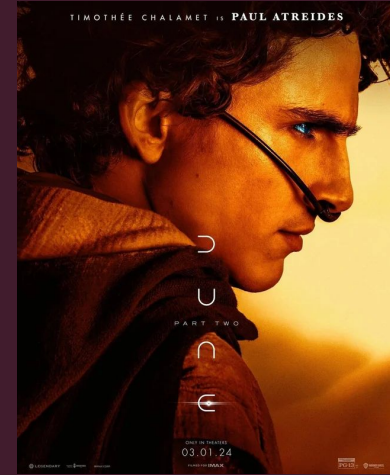
- Paul and Jessica both recognize that the Fremen’s belief in a savior from off-world has been planted by the Bene Gesserit.
- The idea is that whenever the BG do raise up the Kwisatz Haderach, the KH will appear to whole civilizations as a religious figure.



House Atreides



—It's clear that if Paul is able to take on this role of the Lisan al Gaib, he will gain a massive cult following, and with that, the power to strike back at the Harkonnens.



The Fremen

Stilgar

–A respected leader and warrior among the Fremen, and a staunch believer in the Lisan al Gaib.

–When Paul is able to do things that most off worlders could not, like beating Jamis in a duel, it's a fulfillment of prophecy. "As it is written."



The Fremen

Chani

- A fedaykin (warrior) who does *not* believe in the the Lisan al Gaib.
- Chani represents a smaller portion of the Fremen who resist the prophecies. Stilgar represents the more common faithfulness, particularly to the millions of fundamentalists living in the South.



The Fremen



Chani

–Paul has been seeing visions of Chani, in dreams and otherwise. He knows that she will play a crucial role in his future, despite her lack of faith in the Lisan al Gaib.



STOP HERE...
if you don't want spoilers.

Now, we'll breakdown a few of the things that happened in Part 2 that you may have questions about.

If you'd rather experience Part 2 on your own first, come back to this later!



Spice

–Spice is a substance that grants longer life, increases physical abilities, and most important for our story, gives heightened awareness.

–There's a complicated process by which it is created, but to simplify it, it comes from the sandworms. Without the worms, there would be no spice.



The Water of Life



–The Water of Life is like an ultra-spice.

–When an infant sandworm is drowned in water (poisonous to them) it exhales this blue liquid, known as the Water of Life.



The Water of Life

- To become a Reverend Mother is to essentially unlock “genetic memory.”
- The idea here is that humans carry a biological imprint of all our ancestors, and genetic memory is gaining access to that information within yourself, of all the memories of those who came before you.



The Water of Life



- To do this, a substance is needed to help increase a person’s “awareness spectrum”.
- The Water of Life is just that type of substance.



The Water of Life



–The problem is - taking such a substance into your body is lethal. A poison.

–Remember: the Bene Gesserit are trained to control their bodies at a microscopic level (example: they can control the sex of their children).



The Water of Life



–So, a Bene Gesserit sister would use this ability to change the poison within her body.

–If done successfully, the poison becomes a new substance, increasing the “awareness spectrum”, unlocking genetic memory and higher abilities.



The Water of Life



—So, when Jessica performs this Water of Life ritual, she nearly dies. She changes the poison in her body and then gains the memories of all those all that came before her, including other Reverend Mothers.



—Note: Like most Dune things, there's some deeper aspects to this, but for the sake of this presentation, we're gonna keep it simple.



The Water of Life



–Jessica is fundamentally changed as a person, she's not just Jessica anymore, she's all of those women.

–Wait, there's more. Jessica did this ritual while pregnant and her unborn child also unlocked that genetic memory. The child is now fully aware and can even speak to Jessica.



Paul Becomes the Kwisatz Haderach



–Later, Paul goes through the same Water of Life ritual which, to put simply, allows him to fully step into his abilities.

–But I think it might be helpful to quickly breakdown what exactly is going on with Paul's powers.



Paul Becomes the Kwisatz Haderach



–Generally I'm only including story elements that are actually referenced or relevant to the movie, but here I'll add just a little bit of book info for context.

–Paul is not just trained in BG abilities, but also mentat abilities. Remember, mentats are essentially human computers.



Thufir Hawat,
Mentat for House Atreides



Paul Becomes the Kwisatz Haderach



–So, with the combination of BG training, mentat training, and his genetic heritage, Paul already has enhanced abilities.

–When Paul sees visions, they're not mystical. He's calculating probabilities, so as to essentially predict the future.



Paul Becomes the Kwisatz Haderach



- This is why, initially, the visions aren't always correct.
- In Part 1, Paul sees visions of Chani killing him, and of Jamis teaching him the ways of the desert. These are possible futures.



Paul Becomes the Kwisatz Haderach



–As Paul spends time among the Fremen, consuming spice, his abilities continue to enhance.

–And then once he takes the Water of Life, it amplifies to the max. Paul essentially gains prescience. The visions are clear now, because he is computing outcomes at such a high rate.



Paul Becomes the Kwisatz Haderach

–That kind of power is god-like, and terrifying. The reason for Paul's brutal test at the hands of the Reverend Mother is now more clear.

–If a person with the potential for that kind of power cannot control themselves, they should be destroyed.



Harkonnen Heritage



–After taking the Water of Life, Jessica and Paul are both able to deduce a terrible truth.

–Jessica is the daughter of the Baron.

–But there might be more to this than just being an ironic twist, that Paul is fighting his own grandfather.



Harkonnen Heritage

–It's not yet clear how the movies may adapt these concepts from the book, but I'll just point out that if the Water of Life has unlocked genetic memory, that memory includes the Harkonnens.
–Some food for thought.



DUNE

PART TWO

The End... for now.